

DINAR SULTANA

Being born in a small, rural district in the north part of Bangladesh, my childhood can be narrated as episodes outlined by rigorous discipline and control. Inarguably so, the desire was always to be independent be it from the clutches of my mother's reproach, or from the expectations at school.

When I came to Santiniketan as a student, the picturesque town both nourished me, when I was caught in the rapture of independence, and also challenged me, when I received the news of my mother's untimely demise. For a while, in nature I saw but a vast sea of emptiness. I reconciled my own loss with what I saw in nature; how its remnants are not lost but quite simply reborn. This is how I began not painting, but documenting, observing, understanding. Most of this process happens out of my control. The result is at best accidental. I'd like to think that my art tells a tale of both control and accident, echoing a principle of life itself. Once I began my training in art, it was through my newly evolved vocabulary that I found reprieve. Steaming through a ruthless wave of time, I try to make art a little more sensitive. As I transform everyday materials and those associated with rituals and history, the emphasis is on hand worked processes. Oftentimes engaging in a play of absurdity, I have also used architectural and terracotta mould, cotton-pulp, human-hair, snake-skin and a slew of other discarded ephemerals. I then began creating my own paper from using pastes of flower based pulp, News paper recycled pulp and extracting colour from elements such as flower, bark, seed, leaf, sometimes stone and clay. However, creating is nothing but a violent process of making. Something that an artist must come to terms with at some point in their journey. For me, it was through loss. I do not paint; I quite simply make. The fleeting ephemerality of nature have long since fascinated me. I often asked myself, how can I translate this materiality of nature onto my work, when it refuses to be tamed or controlled as per one's will? To this extent, I have adopted an almost archival, quasi scientific method of categorizing and documenting various hues, forms, textures, surfaces, as well as materials such as clay, coal, graphite, pulp made from newspapers (to demolish written language and establish visual language), and a slew of other discarded ephemera found in nature all in pursuit of understanding its materiality. Simultaneously archiving the process and the source substances. My respect for traditional ways of life is borne out in the handmade objects and many of these elements are like fossils to me. I am influenced by historical figures such as the engineer and architect Buckminster Fuller and utopian visions of a self sustaining, egalitarian society. My recent works draw on ideas expressed in Fuller's book *Grunch of Giants* and the formal characteristics of cartographer, architect Bernard J. S. Cahill's *Butterfly map* and Yuval Noah Harari's "Sapience" book, which then merges with my own artistic language and world view. My interest in cosmology and imaginative cartography is inherently connected with pressing concerns around income and resource inequality. A space without a ship alludes to Fuller's concept of 'Spaceship Earth', a phrase Fuller used to describe the entire planet. In this case however, the title implies that our trajectory is adrift, as we forge ahead without adequate care for the planet itself or humanity. My work advocates, as Fuller did, for a collective rebalancing, or global cooperation around human intelligence and the earth's resources, in a way that allows for an 'integrated regenerative system'.



EDUCATION

- 2017 MVA in Painting at Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara, India.
- 2015 BVA in Painting at Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan, India

SOLO PROJECTS

- 2017 One-month residency and exhibition at Kalakriti Art Gallery, Hyderabad, India

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2026 Upcoming_Colomboscope, ninth festival edition 21- 31 January, curated by by Natasha ginwala, Hajra Haider Karrar and Pramodha Weerasekera, Srilanka
- 2025 Upcoming exhibition_Deeksha Nath at Anant at Gallery, New Delhi.
India Art Fair, Delhi, India, represented by Iram Art Gallery www.iramart.in
(Un)Layering the Future Past of South Asia: Young Artists' Voices, curated by Salima Hashmi and Manmeet K Walia at SOAS Gallery, London
- 2024 India Art Fair, Delhi, India, represented by Iram Art Gallery www.iramart.in
"Embodied Vestiges" curated by Satyajit Dave, represented by Iram Art Gallery, Iram Art Gallery, www.iramart.in
Shortlisted for The 2024 Sovereign Asian Art Prize show, Hong Kong
"River Heritage" project, Organised by Brihatta art foundation and funded by British Council
Dhaka
"Telling Time Under The Soil" curated by Aranya Bhowmik at Bikaner House Delhi.
- 2023 Asia Now, Paris, represented by Iram Art Gallery www.iramart.in
Dhaka Art Summit, one of short listed awardee artist from 12 awardee artists, Organised by Samdani Art Foundation, Bangladesh
Tracing Displacement. A group exhibition at BAY AL MAMZAR, Organised by Bangladesh Art Week and Bay AL Mamzar, Dubai

- 2022 Asian art biennale, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Bangladesh,
3rd Edition "Ora Egarojon" live auction at Bangladesh art week .
National Sculpture Exhibition, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Bangladesh
- 2021 Brihatta artist Grantee show at Bengal art gallery, Dhaka, Bangladesh Material Metaphore,
Curated by Aranya Bhowmik, Astanzi, India
- 2020 Korean youth festival, (online show)
Young art exhibition 2020, Shilpakala Art Gallery, Bangladesh
- 2019 National art exhibition, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka, Bangladesh Triloka, Shrishti art
gallery, Hyderabad, India
- 2018 Uncertain Tales 1 and 2, curated by Premjish Achari, Priyasri art gallery, Mumbai, India
1st pool, a group exhibition, organised by Japan Bangladesh cultural society, . Orange art gallery,
Japan
Emerging Palettes, a group exhibition, at Shrishti Art Gallery, Hyderabad, India White Noise, a
group exhibition at Priyashri Art Gallery, Mumbai, India
Alchemy of Memory, a group exhibition at Kalakriti Art Gallery, Hyderabad, India Embark 2018, a
group exhibition at Ark Foundation, Vadodara, Gujarat, India An art mediator, at Dhaka Art
Summit, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka,
- 2017 Entangle Reality, a group show of 5 artists from Bangladesh curated by Ruxmini Chaudhury, at
Liiiii museum Sonnenallee Vienna
Archrival Dialogue-1, Curated by Pronoy Chakraborty, Presented by Priyasri Art Gallery at
Ferreira House, Khotachi Wadi, Girgaon, Mumbai, India.
Archrival Dialogue-2, Curated by Pronoy Chakraborty, Presented by Priyasri Art Gallery at
Priyasri art gallery, Worli, Mumbai, India.
9th Kahal art fair, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka, Bangladesh Abir a group show at
Ahmedabad, Gujrat, India
- 2016 Kochi student art Biennale, Fort Kochi, Kerala, India
"Young Expresion", Pune Biennale, Pune, India.
Lalit Kala academy annual art exhibition, Gujarat State, India
Heritage of architecture of Gujarat, faculty of fine arts, Baroda, Gujarat, India



COLLECTIONS

Lalbhai Museum (Ahmedabad)
Anu Munjal (Satyam Auto Components Pvt Ltd)
Prashant Goenka (Emami Art Foundation)
Rajeeb & Nadia Samdani (Samdani Art Foundation)
Lotus Jewels (Mumbai)
Apurva Amin Architects
Hetero Pharmaceuticals (Hyderabad)
Rajesh Mehra (Jaquar)

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

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| 2024 | Shortlisted for The 2024 Sovereign Asian Art Prize show, Hong Kong
“River Heritage” project, Organised by Brihatta art foundation and funded by British Council
Dhaka |
| 2023 | Dhaka Art Summit, one of grantee artists from 12 awardee artists. Organised by Samdani Art
Foundation, Bangladesh |
| 2022 | Mentioned award At “National Sculpture Exhibition”, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Bangladesh |
| 2021 | 4 months recency grant at Space Studio Baroda, Gujrat, India |
| 2020 | Brihatta artist Grant, Brihatta art foundation, Dhaka, Bangladesh |
| 2018 | Grand award, 9th Kahal art exhibition, Shilpokala Academy, Bangladesh 2018 |
| 2018 | Grand award, 1st pool, Japan Bangladesh culture centre, Japan |
| 2016 | Lalit Kala Gujarat State Art Award and scholarship, Gujarat, India |
| 2011 | Merit Scholarship, Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan, India |

RESIDENCIES AND CAMPS

- 2022 4 months residency and open studio at Space Studio Baroda, India.
- 2019 Sonalika artist Residency programme, organised by Arts4all gallery, Sanskriti Kendra complex at Anandagram, Delhi, India.
- 2019 International environmental art camp, Bassi wildlife Sanctuary.
- 2018 Bassi wildlife sanctuary, Chittorgarh, Rajasthan, India.
- 2018 Sitamata Art Camp, Sitamata wildlife sanctuary, Rajasthan, India.
- 2017 Prantiker Praakritajon edition 5, a series of workshops of Britto Arts Trust with ethnic groups from Bangladesh at Alikadam, Bandorban, Bangladesh.
- 2017 One month residency and exhibition at Kalakriti Art Gallery, Hyderabad, India.

WORKSHOPS

- 2022 Paper making workshop, Art Bangla Foundation, Dhaka, Bangladesh <https://www.art-bangla.org>
Throughout the workshop, focus remained firmly fixed on understanding the materiality of the world around us. Exploring the art of paper making, a craft deeply rooted in tradition and sustainability, it delved into the tactile and sensory aspects of each element, connecting with the inherent stories and symbolism that lie beneath the surface. I also employed this age-old technique to not only repurpose discarded newspapers but also to deconstruct written language and reconstruct a visual language, breaking down communication barriers and unveiling new layers of expression.
- 2022 Organic material discovery, on organic color making process and application, Art Bangla Foundation, Dhaka, Bangladesh. <https://www.art-bangla.org>
Exploring the extraction of colors from a myriad of organic sources—flowers, barks, seeds, leaves, stones, and clay. Here, color was considered as the very "blood of nature," drawing on its symbolism and significance as we transformed raw materials into vibrant, living pigments.
- 2021 Synthetic block print making process at Bodhi, Vadodara, Gujarat, India
- 2018 Book illustration : Eklavya, maddhya pradesh, Bhopal, India
- 2018 Water color and Drawing workshop, Art Bangla Foundation, Dhaka, <https://www.art-bangla.org>



ARTIST TALKS

2017 BRITTO art space, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

2019 Kalakriti art gallery, Hyderabad, India.

2019 Dhaka University, Painting Dept, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Online interview with Ina Puri organised and represented by Iram Art Gallery. www.iramart.in

 Dinar Sultana's tête-à-tête with Ina Puri

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Founding member of Art Bangla Foundation, Dhaka, Bangladesh <https://www.art-bangla.org> Assistant curator at Art Bangla gallery, Art Bangla Foundation, Dhaka, Bangladesh <https://www.art-bangla.org>
Organiser and Co-curator of Art festival, 2019, 2020, 2022, Bangladesh. <https://www.art-bangla.org>